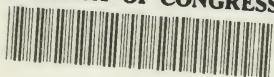


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**The Battle of Rich Mountain and Some
Incidents.**

Paper

**Read Before
The Ohio Commandery
Of The
Loyal Legion**

December 6th, 1911

By

J. Warren Keifer, Major General U. S. V.

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THE BATTLE OF RICH MOUNTAIN.

Some Incidents.

The battle of Rich Mountain was fought in what is now Western Virginia on the 11th day of July, 1861, more than fifty years ago. It was the first battle of the great rebellion.

Sumter (April 12, 1861), where the first angry shots were fired which summoned the hosts of the Union to arms, was bloodless. On April 18, 1861, the United States Arsenal at Harper's Ferry, Virginia, was burned, and the place evacuated. An affair at Big Bethel, Virginia, took place June 10, 1861, not rising to the dignity of a battle, the losses being small, and those on the Union side occasioned, chiefly, by two of our regiments firing upon each other.

The Arsenal at Fayetteville, N. C., was attacked by the Confederates, and, after some negotiations, was, on April 22, 1861, evacuated, and its commanding officer, Captain Julius A. De Lagnel, U. S. A., was permitted to take the troops and stores there to Washington, D. C.

(Please keep DeLagnel's name in mind for he will be spoken of later.)

The affair at Philippi (now W. Va.) June 3, 1861, was a night attack and a surprise by Union troops under Colonels B. F. Kelley and Ebenezer Dumont. Col. G. A. Porterfield in command of the Confederates retreated at day-break with no loss in prisoners; none killed and but one wounded. Col. Kelley (wounded by a pistol shot) was the only union casualty.

Preparations for war on both sides were then in active progress. President Lincoln's first call (April 15, 1861) for 75,000 three month's volunteers had been made, and his first call for three year's volunteers followed, May 3, 1861.

The Confederate authorities were six months or more in advance of the United States in organizing troops, and in real preparation for war.

Before the battle of Rich Mountain many Union officers who, later figured largely in the war, had been commissioned; some of them only, became distinguished. Some were later killed, others with more or less creditable careers continued to the end of the war, and still others, after occupying high commands, lost them and passed to the rear to be judged by posterity. Others came on the scene and took their places.

George B. McClellan was early made a Major-General of Volunteers, and the Department of Ohio, including Western Virginia, was created for him. On May 26, 1861, he issued a proclamation to the people in Western Virginia notifying them that Union forces would soon invade their country; that there would be no interference with their slaves, and asking them to "fly to arms and support the General Government."

William S. Rosecrans, with the rank of Brigadier-General, commanded a brigade under McClellan in his Western Virginia campaign. Others not destined to become conspicuously distinguished were also under him in that campaign.

The Union forces were, in June, mainly assembled at or near Grafton and Clarksburg, Va., and Philippi was occupied on the more direct road from Grafton through Webster to Beverly,

Huttonville, Cheat Mountain, etc., to Staunton, Va. Laurel Hill Mountain on this road, near Philippi, was soon occupied by a Confederate force under General Robert S. Garnett, then in chief command in that part of Western Va. A Union force under Brigadier-General Thomas A. Morris soon confronted Garnett at Laurel Hill.

McClellan assembled the principal part of his army at Clarksburg on the line of railroad from Parkersburg to Grafton, and, by July 2nd, he, with it, reached Buchanan, situated on a turnpike road extending through it from Clarksburg to Roaring Creek, near the base of Rich Mountain and across the mountain to Beverly. Col. John Pegram, then late of the U. S. A., with a Confederate force of about 2,000 men, with considerable artillery, was strongly fortified on the western slope and near the foot of the mountain. His position was pronounced by engineer officers impregnable. His left extended along the base of the mountain to spurs and precipitate parts of it, beyond or around which it was believed no troops could be taken. His right was likewise regarded as impossible to be turned, save by a dangerous, precipitate, long and circuitous route over rugged mountain spurs.

McClellan moved his army forward and camped at Roaring Creek, July 9, 1861, about one and one-half miles in front of Pegram's fortified position. On July 6th, two companies of the third Ohio Infantry, under Captain O. A. Lawson, had a sharp skirmish at Middle Fork Bridge with an advance grand-guard of the enemy, in which there were some casualties. McClellan ensured Brig-General Schleigh (of Ohio) for sending out the expedition without his order.

McClellan's three brigades (there were no divisions then) were commanded by Brigadier-Generals William S. Rosecrans and N. Schleigh and Colonel Robert S. McCook (9th O. V. I.)

General Morris was ordered by McClellan to closely watch General Garnett at Laurel Hill, and should he attempt to withdraw to pursue him.

On the 10th of July, Lieut. Orlando M. Poe, U. S. A., engineer officer on McClellan's staff with the 4th and 9th Ohio regiments and Loomis' (Cold Water, Mich.) battery made a forced reconnoissance on Pegram's front which resulted in confirming the general belief that the position was not only strong but almost impregnable by front attack. McClellan reported the enemy's

"intrenchments were held by a large force, with several guns in position to command the front approaches, and that a direct assault would result in a heavy and unnecessary loss of life."

He seemed to abandon the purpose of trying to take the position, as he entertained the opinion that its flanks could not be successfully turned.

Here, opportunely, a rugged, uncouth mountain-boy, "to the manor born," about eighteen years of age, appeared on the scene. His name was ——— Hart. His home was on Rich Mountain in the rear (towards Beverly) of Pegram's fortified position, distant therefrom about two miles. His father kept an old time tavern on the road where it passed through a slight depression over the mountain summit. Young Hart was filled with patriotism for his country as were most of the plain mountaineers, not only in Virginia, but in all the mountain regions of the South. Inexperienced and ignorant of military movements, campaigns

or battles he found his way to General Rosecrans who patiently heard his story and questioned him as to the strength of the enemy and his position.

Young Hart insisted that Pegram and his engineers were mistaken and that it *was* possible for an army to be marched around his *left* to the summit of the mountain and to his father's house on the road in Pegram's rear. He said he had hunted through the supposed impassable region in the mountain and that he would willingly lead a Union force around the enemy's left to the mountain top, and to his home. Hart so impressed Rosecrans with his sincerity and rustic but perfect knowledge, that at ten o'clock at night of July 10th he was conducted by Rosecrans to General McClellan; and after much entreaty, Rosecrans obtained a reluctant consent to be allowed to lead a movement to Pegram's rear under young Hart's guidance. The details as arranged were, that Rosecrans, with his brigade, composed of the 8th, 10th and 13th Indiana and the 19th Ohio Volunteer Infantry regiments and Burdell's company of cavalry, numbering in all 1917 men (no artillery), should before daylight of the next morning (July 11, 1861) leave the main road at a point about one mile in front of Pegram's position at the base of Rich Mountain and, somewhat circuitous, without a defined road or even pathway, keep under cover of the declivities of the mountain spurs, avoid, so far as possible, the use of an axe or anything that would make a noise, go up the mountain to its crest, thence to the road at the Hart tavern, there establish himself firmly, temporarily fortifying, if found necessary, and from thence attack Pegram's rear.

It will be kept in mind that young Hart had assured Rosecrans that no enemy was located on the mountain in Pegram's rear.

While Rosecrans was engaged in making this circuit McClellan was to move his main forces close under the enemy's guns in front and be in readiness to attack and assault the works, while Rosecrans engaged the enemy's rear. The whole distance the flanking column would have to move was wrongly estimated at about five miles; it proved to be much greater, and the mountain was not only steep but extremely difficult of ascent.

Pegram in his official report (War Records Vol. II, p. 267) states that he regarded his left as entirely free from danger by a flank movement around his left, and almost equally so on his right.

I was then Major of the Third Ohio Infantry serving in McClellan's army, and was, the night of July 10th, in command of a detachment in charge of the pickets on its front and covering the turnpike road well up towards the base of the mountain and closely confronting the enemy's pickets.

I was wholly uninformed of the movement or its purpose, but in the early morning of the 11th, I discovered Rosecrans' column in motion and watched it silently move off the main road into the timber to our right and I then assumed its mission. My pickets extended for some distance into the timber and the somewhat dense thickets on each side of the main road.

Rosecrans' command was well on its way and out of sight at sunrise. I was instructed to be vigilant and to press well back the enemy's pickets, which I did.

About nine A. M., a mounted orderly from McClellan came on a gallop from his headquarters with a large envelope carried under his belt addressed to General Rosecrans, since known to

be an order to him countermanding his order to make the movement then under way and requiring him to halt or retire to a place of safety until another and better plan could be devised. The messenger was directed to overtake Rosecrans by a route to the enemy's *right*, whereas Rosecrans had gone to our *right*, the enemy's *left*. Of this I informed the orderly and offered to put him on Rosecrans' trail. He haughtily spurned my advice and produced a written order from General McClellan signed by his Adjutant General Major Seth Williams of the regular army, commanding all officers in charge of grand guards and pickets to let him pass unmolested. I warned him of the certain danger of proceeding further on the main road, but he persisted in his superior's error, and as he held the supreme authority to go as directed and as I was green in the army and somewhat then in awe of a *Commanding General* I let him pass my advance pickets in search of the trail to our *left*, the enemy's *right*.

In a moment or two the sharp crack of an army rifle was heard, and almost immediately the horse of the orderly came dashing wildly back, wounded and riderless within my lines. The orderly, dead or alive, was in the enemy's hands.

Turning again to Rosecrans. His progress was slow, and in a rain lasting five hours his column struggled through the dense jungle whither only the adventurous hunter had rarely penetrated, and up the mountain side, crossing and recrossing ravines by tortuous ways. By 1 P. M., it arrived, much wearied, near the mountain crest, but yet some distance to the southward of where the main road led through a depression across it towards Beverly and by the Hart tavern.

After a brief rest, without formation for battle, it moved

towards its destination, assured by Hart that no enemy would be there to resist him. On nearing the Hart tavern the enemy was discovered there, in position, with artillery, and somewhat intrenched; and the head of Rosecrans' column was fired on. At once the adventurous young man was charged with treachery, and his life was threatened, but calmer judgment prevailed and saved his life.

Let us return to McClellan. He moved most of his command from his camp at Roaring Creek to Pegram's front, but strenuously denounced to his officers Rosecrans' movement as a mistake for which Rosecrans was alone responsible, saying that he was to receive hourly reports from him during his progress and that none had come. He did, however, receive a message from him noting his progress up to 11 A. M., and when Rosecrans was about $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles from his destination, and before he was fired on as just stated.

McClellan, as already stated, was to attack the enemy in front simultaneously with Rosecrans' attack in his rear.

What, you ask, became of the orderly and his big envelope? Both cut a big figure in the day's doings. He was seriously wounded, captured, and taken with his order directed to Rosecrans to Pegram. The order advised Pegram that Rosecrans' column was afoot; so, likewise, did the orderly. He fortunately reported that Rosecrans had debouched with his troops to the enemy's right. This the orderly seems to have done somewhat doubtfully as Pegram's and other official reports show. (War Records, Vol. 2, pp. 256, 260, 272, 275). His wound served to raise a doubt in his chief's directions.

But Pegram being confident his left was impassible by a turning force, reported to General Garnet at Laurel Hill that Rosecrans was turning his *right*.

Pegram, fearing Rosecrans might possibly pass entirely around his *right* across the mountain and into the turnpike in his rear at a junction of roads eastward of the mountain summit, caused Col. W. C. Scott (4th Va.) with a section of artillery to move from Beverly and look out for Rosecrans at this junction.

Col. Pegram knowing the importance of his immediate rear on the mountain summit dispatched Captain Julius A. DeLaguel, who had recently resigned from the U. S. A. and joined his forces, with some companies of infantry and some pieces of artillery to the Hart tavern there to take position, fortify and look for the approach of Rosecrans' column around the Confederate *right*. Sometime about 10 A. M., De Laguel was in position with his guns pointed toward the expected approach of Rosecrans. This, with some additions sent later, was the force that Rosecrans found, and that fired on his advance troops.

It will now be readily understood why young Hart's assurances that no troops occupied the mountain at his father's house appeared to be false, though this was not known to Rosecrans until the next day. The orderly and his message came near costing young Hart his life.

But what of the battle? De Laguel's force did not exceed 800 or 1000 men of all arms, if so many, but of his actual strength Rosecrans knew little, and, besides DeLaguel's command had some temporary protection and advantage in position, and he had artillery, though this was somewhat neutralized by its having been put in position to fire on an enemy approaching

from a direction opposite from Rosecrans' approach. Both commanders experienced a surprise. Rosecrans' column had some advantage by reason of its being on the backbone of the mountain at a greater elevation than the position of the enemy.

After Rosecrans' advance was fired on and the presence of the enemy was discovered a delay of some forty minutes only followed, during which time the enemy received some re-enforcements, and Rosecrans formed his command for action.

Col. F. W. Lander of McClellan's staff, a man of much frontier life in the West, accompanied the guide in the mountain and actively participated in the battle.

About 1 P. M., Rosecrans bore down on the enemy and a short sanguinary conflict ensued. Our troops were raw, little drilled but well led by their officers. Colonels Samuel Beatty (19th Ohio), Wm. P. Benton, M. D. Manson and Jeremiah C. Sullivan (Indiana) led their regiments gallantly. The battle proper did not last fifteen minutes.

The Confederates made a brave resistance, but they were soon disastrously overthrown, and their artillery captured. Captain De Lagnel was shot and *understood to be killed*. Some of the enemy escaped down the mountain to Pegram's main position, others toward Beverly. Our forces captured twenty-one prisoners, fifty stands of arms, two pieces of artillery and some supplies. McClellan in his report and order, and Confederate officers, announced Captain DeLagnel killed in the battle. (War Records, Vol. II, pp. 208, 217, 226, 245.)

The Union loss was twelve killed and forty-nine wounded and the Confederate loss was probably about the same although there were reports that the Confederates killed alone reached one hundred and thirty-five.

This short conflict comprises the actual battle of Rich Mountain. It was the unexpected.

Turning again to McClellan. We left him in front of Pegram at the foot of the mountain. He chafed there throughout the day, not about an attack, but over Rosecrans' mistake. No order for an attack was issued though McClellan was present near the front throughout the afternoon of the day. I was with my regiment (Third Ohio) which was well up to the front. Becoming restless and over-curious I volunteered (without orders) to make a small reconnoissance on my own hook with about a half dozen men. We passed through jungle and under cover for a time, then came suddenly into a small opening near the road and under the muzzle of some of the enemy's guns located well up the mountain face. A shot from one of them which passed safely over our heads, put an end to our adventure and led to a more than deliberate retreat. I reported the cause of the firing and undertook to describe the location of some of the enemy's guns, but I was met with a sharp reproof and some severe censure from McClellan in person; and I was told by him I "might have brought on a *general* battle before the General Commanding was ready for it." I sinned no more in that way, then, there, or ever, under him. (The gallant General John Beatty, then Lt. Col. 3rd Ohio, has generously described this incident in his "Citizen Soldier.")

We heard the sound of the battle on the mountain, and above the crags and trees could see its smoke, but, when the firing ceased, we did not know the result. It was generally agreed from indications that, as the battle had taken place where no enemy was understood to be and from its short duration, that Rosecrans had been, at least defeated, and probably overwhelmed and captured. This view was taken by McClellan and his staff generally. This conclusion was materially strengthened by a significant occurrences in Pegram's camp on the mountain face.

Late in the afternoon of the 11th, and when the sound of the battle had ceased, an officer was seen to gallop into his camp, halt, in the presence of a body of officers and men, and, apparently, vehemently address them amid responsive cheers. This proceeding being reported to McClellan at once settled him, and others around him, in the belief that Rosecrans had at least been defeated. A little later Confederate troops were observed moving to the rear up the mountain. This, instead of being assumed to be intended (as it really was) re-inforcements for defeated troops, was taken to be a probable aggressive movement, which, in some occult way, might assail our main army. The officer who was seen haranguing in the Confederate camp appealed for a volunteer force to assail Rosecrans, and the cheers were a favorable response. The force thus dispatched was led by Col. Pegram, but it did not attack, and Rosecrans remained inactive in his new position, though threatened somewhat by Col. Scott's troops on the Beverly side of the mountain.

The original plan for Rosecrans to attack from the rear while McClellan simultaneously attacked Pegram's front was not carried out. Late in the day Lieut. Orlando M. Poe (now of "Poe Lock" fame) the engineer officer on McClellan's staff, was

ordered to go to our right up a mountain spur and find a position where artillery could be used against the immediate left of the enemy. I was detailed with two of my companies to accompany, and protect him. We soon reached an eligible position, within rifle range of the enemy's guns and somewhat in their rear. I asked for reinforcements, and permission to open fire, but neither was given, and, being fresh from a rebuke from headquarters, I gave a peremptory order *not* to fire a gun unless fired on. But, as we were soon discovered and fired upon by artillery and scattering infantry, my command responded by a general rifle fire, which, for some reason, was not responded to, and we were allowed to retain our position without further molestation. A road was cut by other troops sent for the purpose, under direction of Lieut. Poe, for artillery. As night came on some other companies, five in all, of my regiment were sent to the position and I was ordered to remain in command of them during the night, the men to be kept standing in line of battle, without fires, ready to repel any attack. The enemy once feebly advanced on my position but retired on being fired upon by my pickets. The rest of the army retired to its camp on Roaring Creek. Let McClellan's report of July 14, 1861, here speak:

"I sent Lieutenant Poe to find such a position for our artillery as would enable us to command the works. Late in the afternoon I received his report that he had found such a place. I immediately detailed a party to cut a road to it for our guns, but it was too late to get them into position before dark, and as I had received no intelligence whatever of General Rosecrans' movement, I finally determined to return to camp, leaving merely sufficient force to cover the working party. Orders were then given to move up the guns with the entire available infantry at daybreak the following morning. As the troops were much fatigued, some delay occurred in moving from camp, and just as the guns were starting intelligence was received that the enemy had evacuated their works and fled over the moun-

tains, leaving all their guns, means of transportaton, ammunition, tents, and baggage behind.

"Then for the first time since 11 o'clock the previous day, I received a communication from General Rosecrans, giving me the first intimation that he had taken the enemy's position at Hart's farm."

(War Records, Vol. II, p. 206.)

This discloses that a battle took place within the hearing of the Commanding General, in sight of its smoke, and that he did not ascertain its issue for fifteen hours after it ceased.

On the morning of the 12th of July, Rosecrans, his staff and a small cavalry escort, rode down the mountain through the enemy's deserted camp and fortifications, bringing intelligence of his victory and of the enemy's flight. I withdrew my command from the mountain height and, though late, joined in the huzzahs. The battle being over and the Commanding General advised it was won, he immediately telegraphed the War Department and the country:

I have won a great victory, in possession of all the enemy's works up to a point in sight of Beverly. Have taken all his guns. * * * Behavior of troops in action and towards prisoners admirable."

Neither Rosecrans or young Hart was then mentioned.

What results followed?

Pegram, the night after the battle, gathered his demoralized forces together and, leaving the weaker ones and all his artillery, wagons, etc., escaped about midnight by a mountain path which led to the northward of Rosecrans' position on the mountain, his purpose being to reach Tygart's Valley and to join General Garnett's forces still supposed by Pegram to be at Laurel Hill in front of General Morris, or in retreat.⁴ So, on the morning of July 12th, we found in Pegram's camp only broken down men

and a number of mere boys—students from William and Mary and Hampden—Sidney Colleges, Va.—too young yet for war. McClellan and staff, his army following, rode up the mountain with dazzling display through the deserted works, viewed the captured guns, etc., gazed on the dejected prisoners, thence to the battlefield, halting there only temporarily to contemplate it, and thence down the eastern slope of the mountain to Beverly, the junction of the turnpike roads from Grafton and Clarksburg, and there his army bivouacked late that day.

I recall that McClellan and his Adjutant General, Major Seth Williams, rode aside on the mountain to view the body of Captain De Lagnel, (their former associate in the U. S. A.) the Confederate Commander in the battle, reported killed the day before.

Garnett, learning of Rosecrans' success on Rich Mountain, hastily abandoned his intrenchments at Laurel Hill and retreated towards Beverly the night of the 11th, pursued by Morris' command, Garnett had ample time to pass through Beverly in safety, but a false rumor reached him that Union forces occupied it early in the morning of the 12th, which caused him to turn off at Leadsville Church, about five miles from Beverly and continue his retreat up Leading Creek, over a difficult road. He was soon closely followed by a portion of Morris' army, directed by Captain H. W. Benham, an engineer staff officer (U. S. A.) General C. W. Hill (of Ohio) failed to intercept Garnett's retreat at Red House, but he was overtaken by Benham's pursuit and killed (July 13th) by a rifle ball while superintending the passage over Cheat River of his rear guard at Carrick's Ford.

What became of Pegram and his forces? They fled over and the mountain and reached the Tygart's Valley River by 7 A. M., July 12th, near the road from Laurel Hill to Beverly, and about three miles from Leadsville Church. They were much broken down and starving, having marched twelve miles. After some delay Pegram set off to join Garnett, but he learned he had not only retreated but was pursued, as stated, and that Beverly was believed to be occupied. Pegram, late on the 12th, addressed the commanding officer at Beverly a note offering to surrender all his remaining command the next morning. Accordingly Pegram conducted his remaining troops to Beverly (six miles) and there surrendered 30 officers and 525 men. Others escaped in squads and singly. The men surrendered were paroled and sent South, save such officers as had left the United States Army to join the Confederacy, who were sent to Ft. Henry for future disposition.

(I note that at Beverly I first met a Mrs. Arnold, a patriotic Union woman, notwithstanding her husband and a son, and her distinguished brother, Lt. General Thomas J. Jackson (Stonewall), were disloyal to the Union. Her only daughter, quite young in 1861, married, near the close of the war, Major Charles H. Evans (8 O. V. C.) of Springfield, Ohio. He was, a few years ago (in charge of one of the public schools in Cincinnati. His wife Grace died some years since, in Springfield, Ohio, and was there buried in Ferncliff Cemetery. Mrs. Arnold, after a short residence in Springfield, Ohio, returned to West Virginia. She died at Buchanan, W. Va., but a few weeks since.

McClellan, a little later, moved his forces eastward from Beverly to Huttonville, Cheat Mountain Summit and to near the mouth of Elk Water, Tygart's Valley, on the Huntersville road,

and his fame went abroad for distinguished skill in campaign and battle.

Bull Run was fought, and lost, July 21st, 1861, only ten days after the battle of Rich Mountain. A war leader was looked for.

McClellan was summoned to Washington on the 22nd of July, where important duties and high command awaited him, which he accepted and held, with varied success, until relieved, permanently, Nov. 7, 1862, at Orleans, Va. He never again held military command. Rosecrans and other who were at Rich Mountain made records, and history, too long to be traced here.

But what further of Captain DeLagnel, the Confederate battle commander, reported killed at Rich Mountain? We last noted McClellan, Williams and others viewing his dead body on the roadside near the battlefield on the summit of Rich Mountain. By his former United States Army and his Confederate acquaintances his death was alike deplored. He had fought, in the first three months of the war, creditably on the Union and Confederate sides. Soon the report of his death reached the then much excited Southern people. By common consent in thousands of churches South, regardless of denominational belief, the Catholic Church not excepted, funeral and memorial services were held. He was spoken of as a first great, heroic, patriotic sacrifice to the cause of the new-born nation—to the liberty and blessings of the human family which it stood to secure, etc. What po-

tentate, or man of fame, has been more honored or more universally mourned?

But another incident here succeeds. On August 14th, 1861, Capt. Henry E. Cunard (3rd O. V. I.) with a part of his company was on a scout on the Brady's Gate road in advance of Camp Elk Water, Tygart's Valley, when Corporal Stiner and Privates Vincent and Watson discovered a man passing stealthily around them through the timber. He was halted and interrogated.

General John Beatty, in his "Citizen Soldier," describes better than I can what took place.

"He professed to be a farm hand; said his employer had a mountain farm not far away, where he pastured cattle; that a two year-old steer strayed away, and he was looking for him. His clothes were fearfully torn by brush and briars. His hands and face were scratched by thorns. He had taken off his boots to relieve his swollen feet, and was carrying them in his hands. Imitating the language and manner of an uneducated West Virginian, he asked the sentinel if he had seed anything of a red steer.' The sentinel had not. After continuing the conversation for a time he finally said: 'Well, I must be a-going, it is a-gettin' late and I'm durned feared I won't get back to the farm afore night. Good-day.' 'Hold on,' said the sentinel; 'better go and see the Captain.' 'O, no, don't want to trouble him, it is not likely he has seed the steer, and it's gettin' late.' 'Come right along,' replied the sentinel, bringing down his gun; 'the Captain will not mind being troubled; in fact, I am instructed to take such as you to him.'"

The Captain was inclined, on examination, to let the man pass without further molestation. But the keen sense of a private soldier detected, and told his Captain that the man could not be a mountaineer, first, because he naturally used good English language—was a scholar; second, because he had high-priced sewed boots, etc. The Captain told the stranger to go with him

to camp for further examination. He protested, but on finding the Captain obdurate and the order final, he threw up his hands and declared he would not go in disguise, or pretending to be what he was not; and he further announced that he knew General Joseph J. Reynolds, our Commander at Camp Elk Water, and that he was a former officer in the United States Army, but that he was then an officer in the Confederate service—late commander of the Confederates in the battle of Rich Mountain—that his name was Julius A. DeLagnel. His tongue, attuned to education and learning, had betrayed him. On this day my acquaintance with DeLagnel commenced. It has not yet ended.

His early home was, and his present home proper, is Alexandria, Va. He was married something over a year ago, and since then he has been spending his honeymoon at the Mendota, Washington, D. C.

DeLagnel, on recovering from the shock of his severe wound, escaped alone to a house in the mountain, where he remained about one month, and then, in trying to rejoin the Confederates, was captured, as stated.

I have a letter, addressed to me, from him, dated November 17th, 1911.

DeLagnel, on being exchanged, served with distinction to the end of the war; then, as did other Confederates, he expatriated himself, with purpose to be a resident citizen of the United States. He first went to Mexico, then to South America, then to several countries in Europe, then to Asia, employed variously whenever he could find employment. He was purser of the ship which in 1878 carried Grant across the Indian Ocean on his journey around the world.

DeLagnel, sadly disappointed with his world-wandering life, abandoned it, returned to his old home at Alexandria, resolved to resume his residence in, and allegiance to, his native land, pledge anew his loyalty to his country and resume his full duties as a citizen of the United States. This he has done faithfully and successfully. He paid me, at my rooms in Washington City, a friendly call shortly after his return (1880), and he then detailed much of his life and adventures abroad, and declared his supreme happiness over his return to his country and kindred; and he expressed his utter failure to find happiness or home during his many years of wandering. He touchingly portrayed his life during all his absence as that of "*a man without a country.*" He formed, while abroad, no enduring friendship; nobody he met cared for him or his welfare, and he took no interest in new acquaintances, and his condition was much like one living in solitude.

Another memorable incident not connected with the Rich Mountain battle will be mentioned. General R. E. Lee assembled (August, 1861) in Western Virginia, at Big Springs, Valley Mountain, well up Tygart's Valley River, a somewhat formidable Confederate Army with the purpose of driving our forces out of that region. He advanced early in September, 1861, down the valley to the front of General Reynold's command at Camp Elk Water.

On the 12th of September, I was posted, in the advance, with companies of my own and other regiments and some artillery on grand guard, outpost and picket duty, near the mouth of Elk Water, a position commanding the Elk Water and Brady's Gate road, the main pike and the whole then narrow valley of the Tygart's. Lee's advance was then in my immediate front. A

preliminary fight was expected to take place there. On the afternoon of September 13th, a report came to me that a body of Confederate cavalry was rapidly approaching from Brady's Gate (near the place of DeLagnel's capture) down the Elk Water, which would bring it into my rear. I made some necessary dispositions, but, being incredulous about cavalry undertaking to maneuver in a narrow mountain road, I went personally to my advance picket post to make observations and to obtain first-hand information. Some soldiers of the 11th Ind. (Col. Haskell's) were there on picket. While there two richly caparisoned and well-mounted officers rode into full view from around a point of a mountain spur, followed, not closely, by a cavalry force. On seeing us, the two officers halted and hastily wheeled their horses about to escape. They were distant about 150 yards. Sergeant Weller and three or four others, by my command, fired on them. The leading officer fell from his horse, and the other officer's horse fell with him, but he arose, and, by mounting the fallen officer's horse, fled and escaped, as did the cavalry, for other pressing reasons. I hastened to the side of the fallen officer raised him on one elbow, and, though gasping and dying, he (as usual with the wounded) called for "water." When brought from the nearby stream he was dead. At least three balls penetrated from his back through his left breast.

A few years since Rev. John T. Rose, an Episcopal minister, son of Captain George S. Rose of General Reynold's staff, showed me a common-sized letter envelope taken from this officer's breast pocket showing three bullet holes through it. I readily recognized it with the dried blood on it.

This officer was John Augustine Washington, then serving as aid-de-camp, with the rank of lieutenant colonel, on General

Robert E. Lee's staff. He was probably the then nearest living relative of George Washington, and great-grandson of General Washington's brother, John Augustine Washington, and, on his mother's side, a great-grandson of Richard Henry Lee, of Revolutionary fame. He had owned Mount Vernon, but had sold it to an association of patriotic ladies, who still own it. He fell in his first military campaign. His body was taken the day after his death, under a flag of truce, and delivered to his great chief—Lee. It was buried on his "Waveland" plantation, near Marshall, Fauquier Co., V. His eldest son, Lawrence Washington, a friend of mine, is a resident of Washington, D. C., has a large family and is a clerk in the Congressional Library.

The officer who escaped was Major W. H. F. Lee, son of General R. E. Lee. He became a major-general in the Confederate Army; was wounded and captured at Brandy Station, Va., 1863; was exchanged and surrendered at Appomattox. His brother, George Washington Curtis Lee, was a West Point graduate, who left the United States Army, *after* his illustrious father, and served with distinction through the Civil War, reached the rank of major-general, and was captured by my command at Sailor's Creek, Va., the last field battle of the war, April 6th, 1865, three days before his father surrendered his sword and the army of Northern Virginia to Grant at Appomattox.

